



**OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND BILATERAL AFFAIRS (OBRA) WEEKLY
REPORT: April 18 – 25, 2018**

**COMMISSION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION (CEC) ALT. REP.
MEETING:**

- On April 25, EPA's CEC Council Alternate Representative (Alt Rep) Nishida hosted and chaired a regular Alt Reps meeting with Canada, Mexico, the CEC Secretariat and the Chair of the Joint Public Advisory Committee to continue designing and planning the 2018 CEC Council Session and implementation of the current CEC2017-2019 Operational Plan.
- The Alt Reps addressed the following topics: Program for the 2018 Council Session implementing the theme of "Innovations and Partnerships for Green Growth"; Confirmed activities with Oklahoma University, National Weather Center and Innovation Hub to showcase partnerships, innovation and linkages to CEC portfolio priorities and green growth and identity potential trilateral deliverables; Youth Innovation Challenge and Business Challenge at the Tom Love Innovation Hub; Ministerial roundtable with academia, state and private sector representatives; and CEC Strategic planning and budgets for 2018. [Troche, Hong, Jordan]

**INPUT BY STATES AND TRIBES TO GAPS ANALYSIS ON TRANSBOUNDARY
IMPACTS FROM B.C. MINING:**

- EPA and State held conference calls with states and tribes impacted – or potentially impacted – by mining activities in British Columbia, to solicit their views on the communication to Canada concerning an assessment of current efforts taking place to resolve real and potential transboundary impacts from mining.,
- Separate conference calls were made with the states of Alaska, Idaho and Montana, as well as the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, and the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska. Regions 8 and 10 organized the calls, and were joined by State and OITA.
- A preliminary gaps analysis of current collaboration efforts between the states and B.C., as well as the input from states and tribes on this gaps analysis, helped to shape the tone and content of a recently sent letter to GAC with results of the analyses. [Teel]

EPA AND STATE DEPARTMENT MEET WITH SALMON BEYOND BORDERS:

- EPA met this week with a delegation representing a campaign known as Salmon Beyond Borders, which was initially organized to protect and restore the salmon-spawning rivers in Southeast Alaska. The group has expanded to include individuals from Montana with a vested interest in impacts from the Elk River mines in Southeast British Columbia (B.C.) to the Kootenai Watershed in Montana and Idaho.
- The delegation was in town to meet with congressional representatives and bring attention to the campaign; it also hoped to meet others in town for the Spring Semi-Annual International Joint Commission Board Meetings, taking place this week. The visit with EPA was to learn about the status of the assessment and communication to Canada concerning gaps in current efforts to resolve real and potential contamination from B.C. mines.
- Meeting participants included State Department's Office of Canadian Affairs; EPA participants included Region 8, OGC and OITA. [Teel]

NATIONAL ADVISORY AND GOVERNMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (NAC/GAC):

- On April 26, EPA's CEC Alternate Representative Nishida and CEC General Standing Committee (GSC) Troche met with the NAC/GAC. Alt Rep Nishida briefed the committees on EPA priorities, plans for CEC Council Session, and EPA's Tribal work.
- She also briefed the NAC/GAC on the topic for consultation: "marine litter prevention and opportunities to capitalize on best practices, in particular with the private sector". [Troche]

CEC GENERAL STANDING COMMITTEE (GSC):

- On April 26, EPA's CEC Chair to the GSC hosted a GSC meeting with Canada, Mexico, the CEC Secretariat, and the Chair of the Joint Public Advisory Committee to continue planning the 2018 CEC Council Session.
- They worked on: identifying partners for the National Weather Center and Tom Love Innovation Hub; designing deliverables for Ministerial announcements; program and logistics for the Council Session; communication and exhibits; Youth Innovation Challenge and Business Challenge; and the Ministerial roundtable with academia, state and private sector representatives [Troche]

COMMISSION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION 2018 COUNCIL SESSION PLANNING:

- EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs ORBA Director Mark Kasman and Luis Troche Senior Advisor for North America met with leadership at Oklahoma University and the National Weather Service to explore partnerships that may be announced at the CEC Council session in June.
- They also finalized the itineraries for the events on Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth at the National Weather Service, the Tom Love Innovation Hub and the Ronnie K. Irani Center for the Creation of Economic Wealth in Norman, Oklahoma. The team also identified related technology and capacity exhibits for the Council Session. [Troche, Kasman]

NEW EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WASTE AND RECYCLING LEGISLATION:

- On April 18, the European Parliament approved four directives regarding waste. The new rules, part of the Commission's December 2015 Circular Economy Action Plan, require that by 2025, at least 55% of municipal waste be recycled. The target will rise to 60% by 2030 and 65% by 2035. Additionally, 65% of packaging materials will have to be recycled by 2025, and 70% by 2030. The share of municipal waste being landfilled will be limited to 10% by 2035.
- The legislation also urges member states to halve food waste by 2030, mandates reporting on food waste levels starting in 2020, and requires the creation of "incentives" for collecting and redistributing unsold food. The legislation will enter into force after final approval by the European Council over the coming weeks, and publication in the EU's Official Journal. [Buckley]

OFFICE OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS AND POLICY

April 26, 2018



Engagement with Israel on Addressing Lead in Paint and Products

Staff from OGAP, ORBA and OSCPP began conversations with representatives of the Israeli Ministry of Health (MOH) about addressing lead in paint and children's products in Israel. The teleconference was hosted by the U.S. Embassy in Israel, and also attended by a representative from the Department of State. EPA provided presentations on the U.S. approach to regulating lead in paint and children's toys, and an overview of the Lead Paint Alliance including the Model Law, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) project, and International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week 2018. The Israel MOH described the national approach to setting standards, results of recent pilot testing on paint and products, and challenges and opportunities in working with industry. Israel is one of the named countries in the draft GEF Project, which will begin implementation later this year, and also expressed interest in playing a leadership role with other countries in the region. This meeting was a result of advance team efforts for the postponed EPA Administrator trip to Israel in February. The group agreed to schedule additional calls to explore next steps on this topic and discuss other topics related to lead exposure. [Marzouk, Mercurio, Bandemehr]

World Bank Spring Meetings

OITA attended the World Bank Spring Meetings, last week. The Spring Meetings bring together central bankers, ministers of finance and development, parliamentarians, private sector executives, representatives from civil society organizations, and academics to discuss issues of global concern, including the world economic outlook, poverty eradication, economic development, and aid effectiveness. Meetings concerning the rollout of the World Bank's new Environmental and Social Framework were widely attended by civil society and as well as the USG. The Bank discussed timing and challenges related to the release of the new framework, as well as its predicted adoption by various of other development finance institutions. The USG continues to engage with the Bank on this and other issues to ensure environmental and social protections are properly incorporated into the Bank's lending framework. [Ferrante, Harrington]

12th OECD Forum on Responsible Mineral Supply Chains

OITA staff participated in the 12th OECD Forum in Responsible Mineral Supply Chains, a public-private forum to advance government and private industry dissemination, adoption and implementation of the *OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Mineral Supply Chains Guidance*. The Guidance provides governments and industry with a due diligence standard and

framework from which they can adapt their own due diligence protocols for sourcing minerals, such as gold. OITA staff promoted the establishment of mercury-free gold supply chains, coordinating industry due diligence initiatives with government efforts to formalize the artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) sector, which is the leading source of mercury emissions globally. Formalization of ASGM, which is a critical step in establishing a transparent gold supply chain, allows for proper development of the sector, reducing mercury use while facilitating the economic potential of the sector. It is estimated that up to 15 million people work in ASGM in about 70 countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa. The most recent estimates put ASGM at 15% of worldwide primary mine production, and growing. [Vauter]

OECD-World Bank ASM Roundtable

OITA participated in a World Bank and OECD-convened multi-stakeholder consultation to discuss country projects and initiatives to formalize the ASGM sectors in gold-producing countries. The World Bank presented the upcoming launch of the Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) Global Centre of Excellence project. The project is designed to support the ASM sector by catalyzing improved coordination and collaboration among ASM stakeholders all along the supply chain. Initial project goals include developing an online ASM knowledge sharing and technical assistance platform, establishing a Global Support Hub for the ASM sector housed in the World Bank Group, and piloting collaborative assistance on prioritized topics in selected countries. The roundtable also provided updates to the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) GOLD program. The GEF GOLD program provides \$180 million of leveraged funding for ASGM formalization and supply chain projects in eight countries around the world. [Vauter]

Global Methane Forum and Climate and Clean Air Coalition

To advance the work of the Arctic Council's Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP) working group, OITA participated in the Global Methane Forum and meetings of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition in Toronto last week. There were updates on the scientific understanding of the health, environmental and climate impacts of short-lived climate pollutants such as black carbon and methane, as well as advances in measurement and mitigation measures and supporting policy frameworks. This pointed to a variety of possible collaborative efforts that Arctic Council members, especially ACAP and observers, might pursue in the Arctic. [Muehling, Huber]

Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP) Expert Group Meetings

OITA chaired the meeting of two Arctic Council's ACAP Expert Groups - Indigenous Peoples Contaminants Action Program (IPCAP) and Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCP) held on the margins of the ACAP meeting included meeting last week in Toronto. IPCAP welcomed and endorsed a project proposal from the Saami Council, one of the Arctic Council's Permanent Participants, to inventory and clean-up waste in the Saami territory in the Murmansk region of Russia. The inventory is expected to be completed this summer. IPCAP representatives also welcome the report on the feasibility study on Circumpolar Local Environmental Observer (CLEO) expansion in the Sapmi region with expected progress to be announced this summer. Officials from the CCAC and the LRTAP Convention briefed the SLCP Expert Group on their respective work on black carbon and methane measurement and mitigation, and called for more ACAP activity in these areas. The Expert Group is hopeful that Russia will lift its reservations on the start-up of approved ACAP projects involving gas flaring, use of HFCs in seafood

processing, and green marine shipping in Russia. Moreover, the group agreed on the need to identify and propose new projects that will be conducted in other Arctic countries and preferably draw in the expertise of key Arctic Council Observer nations. The group will work with the ACAP Secretariat and NEFCO to prepare high-level overviews of past and current SLCP-related projects for the Arctic Environment Ministers Meeting (Rovaniemi, Finland, October 2018) and the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting (May 2019) that will conclude the Finnish Chairmanship. [Huber, Muehling]

Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP) Working Group Meeting

OITA represented EPA and the USG in the Arctic Council's ACAP working group meeting held April 19-20 in Toronto. Among the items on the agenda, Meteorological Organization and the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program and Protection of the Marine Environment working groups of the Arctic Council gave presentations on their work and discussed opportunities for coordination and collaboration, particularly on AMAP's forthcoming desk study on marine litter, potential contributions to addressing micro-plastics in the Arctic, and how AMAP might contribute to and benefit from ACAP's Community Black Carbon Health Assessment. Among the decisions made last week, ACAP agreed to fast track a Saami Council proposal to inventory solid and hazardous waste in the Murmansk, to produce inputs, including on past and current SLCP-related projects, for the Arctic Environment Ministers Meeting to be held in Finland in October, and to encourage expert groups to consider potential deliverables to the Finnish Chairmanship Ministerial in 2019 and projects to be considered under ACAP's Workplan for 2019-2021. [Huber, Muehling]

EPA Meets with UN Environment Program and World Health Organization on Lead Paint

Last week OGAP met with senior officials at the UN Environment Program and the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland for strategic planning meetings on the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (Lead Paint Alliance). UN Environment and WHO are the Secretariat of the Alliance and EPA is the Chair. Both UN organizations expressed their ongoing commitment to the Lead Paint Alliance and the importance of a successful outcome of establishing lead paint laws in every country. Both organizations are staffing up to provide increased support and committed to concrete follow up action items to continue to improve visibility and effectiveness of the Alliance. UN Environment will continue to improve the Alliance web site and focus on outreach to high level policy makers to promote lead paint laws. WHO will work to update the Alliance contact database to enable ongoing communication with Alliance partners. Among other outcomes, the participants agreed to produce a bi-annual newsletter to keep partners and other interested organizations apprised of what is expected to be increasing progress toward the goal of global elimination of lead paint. [Smith, Bandemehr]

Lead Paint Alliance Advisory Council Meeting

Last week the Lead Paint Alliance held a bi-annual Advisory Council meeting. The Advisory Council of the Lead Paint Alliance is chaired by EPA and comprises a representative set of partners from business, environmental and health NGOs, developing country governments (Moldova, Colombia and Kenya) and regional organizations (European Commission). The substantive presentations and robust discussion in the meeting demonstrated the increasing momentum toward the Alliance goal to establish lead paint laws in every country. Industry

representatives from the International Paint and Printing Ink Council underscored their commitment to promoting lead paint laws, working with governments and seeking regional champions to assist with development and implementation of laws. Environmental NGO representatives from IPEN reported on their extensive lead paint test results from the past year and planned new testing in the coming year. Government representatives reported on concrete actions toward lead paint laws. The UN Environment program briefed Council members on the upcoming Global Environment Facility project and EPA presented UN Environment's revamped web site for the Alliance. WHO provided an evaluation of the outcomes of all International Lead Weeks of Action, which have been conducted annually since 2013, resulting in ever increasing participation in the Week and awareness of the lead paint issue. [Smith, Marzouk, Bandemehr]

Guyana Gold Board Mercury Contamination

The Government of Guyana is actively involved with the artisanal and small scale gold mining sector, and provides services to miners that include refining sponge gold from the field, some of which includes mercury. The Geology and Mines Commission contacted EPA for assistance in addressing a failure of its mercury capture systems, which are located in government buildings housing other agencies and services not related to mining. Elevated mercury levels have been detected in the facility, and several staff in who work in areas not related to the mining have been measured with elevated blood mercury levels. OITA facilitated communication with an EPA On Site Coordinator to provide advice on emergency response, and will be ensuring communication with the U.S. Embassy in Guyana and the State Department on possible next steps [Vauter, Ankrah, Reiner].

Meeting of the Environment Policy Committee of the OECD

OITA participated in the Environment Policy Committee (EPOC) meeting of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), held April 16-18, 2018. Meeting topics included environmental assessment policy, OECD partnership status of South Africa and Kazakhstan, methods and benefits of monitoring global land cover, future areas of work within OECD's environment portfolio and accession to the OECD. During discussions about OECD's future work, delegates raised multiple interests including resource efficiency, biodiversity and trade. In coordination with several delegations, EPA raised the issue of modernizing OECD's Environmental Performance Review (EPR) program – currently a cyclic and country-specific assessment effort that must evolve to match the modern policy-making landscape. EPA helped build consensus across multiple countries and within OECD's Secretariat to encourage EPOC to rethink this effort, in an attempt to increase peer-to-peer learning among countries, ensure greater policy impact, and advance domestic economic interests of OECD members. OITA chaired the session on accession, primarily focused on Costa Rica's potential future accession. Prior to the meeting, OITA participated in EPOC's Bureau meeting and met with OECD staff to discuss ongoing work on the cooperative agreement between EPA and OECD. On the last day of the EPOC meeting, OITA participated in a G20 side meeting facilitated by Japan to discuss their upcoming G20 presidency (2019), their proposal for a joint environment and energy G20 ministerial, and possible substantive support of Japan's G20 presidency by OECD. In preparation for the EPOC meeting, and for ongoing environmental work with OECD, OITA coordinates on topics with experts throughout US EPA, State Department and other USG agencies with environmental equities. OITA's participation in the

EPOC meeting and side meetings helped ensure that OECD efforts are consistent with -- and supportive of -- U.S. international priorities and domestic interests. [Smith, Ziegler]

OMIS Weekly Report (April 23-27, 2018)

New email box for U.S. AID clearances: The U.S. Agency for International Development has created a new group email box that can be used when submitting official requests for U.S. AID clearance: USAIDclearance@usaid.gov.

Documents sent to this address will reach the U.S. AID Executive Secretariat and other key personnel across U.S. AID.

Senior Official Travel

1 trip is scheduled for this report period by EPA senior managers.

Alexandra Dunn 4/24/2018
Regional Administrator
Destinations: CANADA - Tobique
Meeting: St. John River Summit #4